



Photo shows several debris retrieved from the military transport plane yesterday that crashed on 7th June in the Andaman Sea off the Taninthayi Coast. **PHOTO: MNA**

Two people stabbed to death in Rakhine, State Chief Minister provided cash assistance to survivors

Two of four people attacked yesterday in Kyunpaukpyu Village, Maungtaw Township, Rakhine State were fatally stabbed yesterday morning, according to a Myanmar News Agency report.

U Aung Kyaw and U KoKo Thein, who were killed in the attack and two other victims who survived, were all from the village of Tarain, near the

location of the assault.

Rakhine State Chief Minister U Nyi Pu offered words of consolation and cash assistance of Ks500,000 to each of the the dead victims' families and Ks300,000 and Ks200,000 to an injured assault victim and another who was not injured, respectively.— Myint Maung Soe, Aung Kyaw Oo ■

Correction

Please read “U Ko Ko Shein appointed as Ambassador to Russian Federation” in the Press Communique on the Page three of the 28th June issue of the Global New Light of Myanmar.—Ed

Turning on the Lights in Rural Myanmar

The late afternoon breeze brings the village of Sai Pyun out— children race each other on bikes, weaving through neighbors fetching water in metal jugs on their heads or yellow plastic tanks carried on their shoulders, and through strutting hens and their chicks pecking at feed on dusty, sun-cracked roads.

As in much of rural Myanmar, residents of this village in Ayeyarwady make the most of the sunlight each day brings. Open doors, windows and slits in patterned rattan walls let in what light they can of the afternoon sun when the village is tinted gold. Chores that were too hot to do midday are completed, village residents bathe and wash clothes in the river. Mothers squat around a fire, cooking their families' dinner, smoke rising behind wooden, lattice fences.

Sometimes the sun sets as early as 5:30 pm, swallowing the village in darkness and leaving residents to rely on the dim light of candles or the limited lifespan of inverter batteries. Ei Po Po

Aung is one of these residents who in two weeks' time, along with her 11th grade classmates, will take her university entrance exam. She has ambitions to become a teacher, but she faces a few obstacles to achieve this dream.

“Last year, only nine out of 45 students in Grade 11 passed the exam,” said Ei Po Po Aung. “I want to pass the exam with many distinctions, but we have seven family members and only one light bulb for the whole family. I study about six hours every night and after the battery runs out, I rely on candlelight but I cannot see clearly and sometimes the wind blows the flame out.”

Ei Po Po's eldest sister suffered from tuberculosis in her childhood, and had to quit school after 5th grade to help her father fish.

“I really feel sorry that my eldest daughter didn't have a chance to study well,” said Ei Po Po's father, Win Bo. “So for Ei Po Po Aung, who is outstanding in her education, my biggest wish

is to help fulfill her dreams. We really worry for her so getting electricity can be a big help for my daughter to pass these exams.”

Most of Sai Pyun's 76 households, including that of Win Bo, rely on fishing for their livelihood, but the bulk of the fish they catch are mainly to feed themselves. Candles and recharging batteries are practically a daily expense. Win Bo spends 500 kyat (40 US cents) on candles per night and 300 kyat (20 US cents) to recharge batteries every two days. With each household earning an average of 3-4,000 kyat or \$2-3 each day, expenses on candles and batteries eat up a large fraction of daily income.

For many families like Win Bo's, connecting to Myanmar's existing energy network seems like a far off dream. Only 30% of Myanmar's population is connected to the electricity grid and as of 2014, only 16% of rural households were connected.

Now the Government of Myanmar, with the help of the World Bank, is rolling out on-grid

and off-grid electricity services to rural communities as part of its National Electrification Plan. The plan aims to bring electricity to everyone in Myanmar by 2030, installing modern solar home systems and mini-grids for remote villages that would otherwise have to wait years for a grid connection. The plan calls for a phased approach— 50% access by 2020, 75% by 2025, and universal access by 2030.

The project's first procurement package for the supply and installation of solar PV systems for households, schools, clinics, religious buildings and street lights was launched through international competition in early 2016, and the resulting prices were more than 40% below budget and saved Myanmar \$37 million. These savings allowed an increase in the number of solar home systems for the benefit of more families and a 30% reduction in the families' contributions.

Installation of solar PV systems by local Myanmar companies is now under way in eight of

Myanmar's states and regions, benefiting over 2,000 villages and 140,000 households. The next round of international competitive bidding has started and installation is expected to start early 2018, aiming to electrify an additional 95,000 households.

Ultimately, about 450,000 solar home systems, 23,000 solar-based community connections for clinics, schools and religious buildings will be created, and over 150,000 public lights will be put up in the duration of the project. It will benefit approximately 700,000 people by October 2017 and more than 2 million people by 2021 from off-grid electrification alone. As new electricity services are being rolled out, it has the potential to transform life in rural Myanmar. New sources of electricity will help Ei Po Po Aung to study without disruption, conquering one more obstacle on her way to achieving her dream, and help her family save on daily expenses while enabling them to be more productive. — World Bank ■

Invitation to young writers for Sunday section

The Global New Light of Myanmar is accepting submissions of poetry, opinion, articles, essays and short stories from young people for its weekly Sunday Next Generation Platform. Interested candidates can send their works to the Global New Light of Myanmar at No. 150, Nga Htat Kyee Pagoda Road, Bahan Township, Yangon or by email to dce@globalnewlightofmyanmar.com with the following information: (1) Sector you wish to be included in (poetry, opinion, etc.), (2) Real name and (if different) your penname, (3) Your level of education, (4) Name of your School/College/University, (5) A written note of declaration that the submitted piece is your original work and has not been submitted to any other news or magazine publishing houses, (6) A color photo of the submitter, (7) Copy of your NRC card, (8) Contact information (email address, mobile number, etc.).— Editorial Department, The Global New Light of Myanmar news office